Experiential Learning at CPS

At the College of Professional Studies, co-ops and internships are optional components of bachelor’s and masters degree programs. The program follows a "parallel" model, meaning that students work at their placements during the day and may take classes at night. Experiential Learning programs are great opportunities for students to explore in-class learning through real-world work, explore career interests and network with potential employers, while employers have the opportunity to bring fresh ideas to projects and build a talent pipeline.

1) Plan Ahead

Speak with your Academic & Student Support Specialist to plan ahead for a co-op or internship during your degree program. Every student who does a co-op (paid, 35-40 hours/wk) or internship (paid or unpaid, 10-20 hours/wk) will need to take COP6940 (graduate) or COP3940 (undergraduate) - Personal and Career Development. This is a three quarter hour class that can count for an elective as long as you have gotten permission from your department. Students are financially responsible for the 3QH. We suggest that you start planning for your co-op or internship during your first quarter at the College of Professional Studies. If you are an international student, explore the information for international students page to learn about Curricular Practical Training (CPT) authorization.

Note: Students cannot engage in a co-op or internship if they have previously completed all required coursework for their degree program. For example, if you are completing the quarter hours required for graduation in spring term you may not do a sponsored internship or co-op during the following summer. You must be an active student in order to participate in this program.

2) Apply

Students who have completed one term at The College of Professional Studies and are interested in an internship/Co-op will fill out and submit an application. The application must be received in order for the Cooperative Education staff to begin working with you. Once you have completed the application, mail, email or bring it to the Cooperative Education department at CPS (contact information is on the application form).

3) Prepare

Once we have your application we will enroll you in a 6 week preparation course called COP 5001 Preparation for Experiential Learning. This course prepares students for searching for and securing an experiential learning placement. Students will have the opportunity to develop a job search strategy, gain greater understanding of skills and traits required for their career field and understand the key components of business professionalism. Students will gain a greater understanding of the CPS cooperative education and academic internship policies, procedures and expectations.

4) Search

You can either find a co-op or internship through our department or through your own search. You will implement the search plan you created in the preparation course, so that you can hopefully land an experiential learning opportunity. There are no guarantees that every student will find a placement since ultimately you need to interview and be offered a position. In addition to the company “leads” you discover during the preparation course, CPS staff will also try to provide additional leads and offer as much support as possible to help you in your search.

Students who find a work opportunity on their own can petition to have it become an approved placement. The requirements and application process are the same, but students also have to include a placement description form with the details of the position in their application. We will determine whether it falls into the internship or Co-op category. The corresponding academic requirements are the same for these self-designed experiences.

5) Engage!

Upon acceptance of a position, students will be enrolled in the "success" course COP 6940 or COP 3940 Personal and Career Development (students are financially responsible for the 3QH). The course is designed to support students as they go through their work placement, help merge work experiences with career exploration and academic goals, and make sure you end up with a very successful experience overall. The course fulfills 3 open elective credits or a portion of a capstone project as long as you have cleared it with your academic division. The course runs every term and you must be enrolled during the first 12 weeks of your internship or co-op. At this stage international students will apply for Curricular Practical Training authorization. Visit our information for international students page for more information on this.

Please visit our website for more information www.neu.edu/cps/coop
Co-op/Internship Application Timeline

To maximize the chances of finding your ideal internship/co-op during your degree, we recommend you follow the timeline outlined below:

During your first quarter at CPS
- Review program information and eligibility requirements for co-ops and internships listed on our website www.neu.edu/cps/coop
- Speak with your Academic & Student Support Specialist to plan when to engage in a co-op/internship and how the credits will be incorporated in your degree

Once you have completed a minimum of 8-9 QH
- Complete and submit the application form
- Receive notification from the co-op department about the status of your application
- You will be enrolled in COP 5001 Preparing for Experiential Learning (there is no fee for this course)

While enrolled in the preparation course and until you secure a position
- Identify target positions and companies
- Improve/update/tailor your resume and cover letter
- Apply for co-ops/internships
- Interview at prospective companies

Once you receive an offer
- Notify the co-op department
- Confirm your offer
- **International Students** – Apply for CPT (Curricular Practical Training) authorization through the co-op department. Allow 2-3 weeks for processing. **Students cannot begin work until they receive CPT authorization from ISSI**
- **International Students** working in a paid position must apply for Social Security once they receive their CPT authorization
- You will be enrolled in a 3 QH, online course COP 6940/3940 Personal and Career Development (students are financially responsible for the 3QH)

While on your co-op/internship
- Participate online in COP 6940/3940
- Enjoy your co-op/internship!

Co-ops vs Internships

**Co-ops**
- Related to your degree field
- 12-24 weeks in length (Maximum 2 quarters)
- Paid positions where students negotiate a salary with their employer
- Between 35-40 hours a week
- Accompanied by the 3 QH course: COP3940/6940 Personal and Career Development
- Participation in a co-op constitutes full time status for visa and financial aid purposes. Students do not need to take additional classes other than COP 3940/6940 Personal and Career Development

Eligibility Requirements for a Co-op:
- Enrollment in a Bachelors or Masters degree program
- Cumulative GPA 3.000 or above
- Undergraduates must have completed 42 quarter hours in foundation degree courses at CPS. Graduate students must have completed 21 quarter hours in required courses at CPS. (Students may not be on academic probation or have an “incomplete” grade for any of their required prerequisites.)
- Undergraduate students holding an F-1 visa must be enrolled full time for one academic year (three consecutive quarters) before engaging in co-op.

**Internships**
- Related to your degree field
- 12-24 weeks in length (Maximum 2 terms)
- Paid or unpaid positions
- 10-20 hours a week
- Accompanied by the 3 QH course: COP3940/6940 Personal and Career Development
- Approved internships do not constitute full time status. Students need to take additional quarter hours to meet their enrollment requirements.

Eligibility Requirements for an internship:
- Enrollment in a Bachelors or Masters degree program
- Cumulative GPA 3.000 or above
- Undergraduate students must have completed 15 quarter hours in foundation degree courses at CPS. Graduate students must have completed 12 quarter hours in required courses at CPS. **Regulatory Affairs students must have completed 20 quarter hours to be eligible for internships.** (Students may not be on academic probation or have an “incomplete” grade for any of their required prerequisites.)
- Undergraduate students holding an F-1 visa must be enrolled full time for one academic year (three consecutive quarters) before engaging in an internship.

Please visit our website for more information www.neu.edu/cps/coop.

Email cpscoop@neu.edu